

9

the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service

黒鷺死体宅配便

eiji otsubo 大塚英志 noursui yamazaki 山崎峰水

STAFF A



Psychic

【イタコ】死体との対話

STAFF B



Dowsing

【ダウジング】死体の位置

STAFF C



Hacking

【ハッキング】情報の収集



YOUR BODY IS THEIR BUSINESS!



黒鷲死体宅配便

the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service



story

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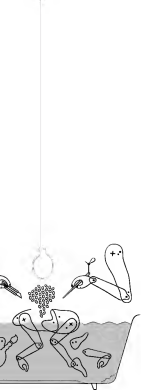
lettering and touch-up

IHL

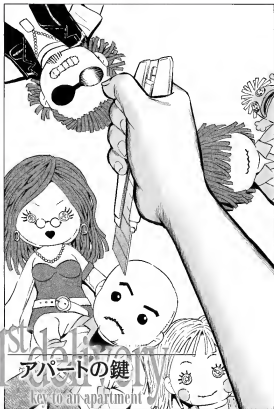


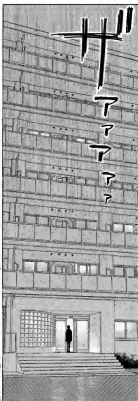
contents

1st delivery: key to an apartment	5
2nd delivery: a lonely singing doll	29
3rd delivery: grape-colored experience	55
4th delivery: tears that disappear into the sand	79
5th delivery: white house by the sea	103
6th delivery: a certain situation	127
7th delivery: what lies after the dream	149
8th delivery: my sadness	173
disiecta membra: glossary and notes	201



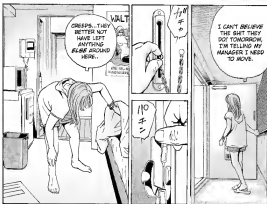




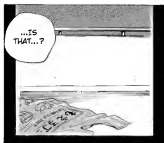




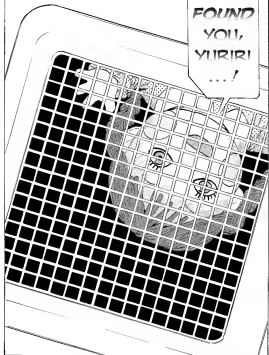








I
FOUND
YOU,
YURI!
...!









MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY THAT AT THE DUNNIT THIS IS JUST A BUNCH OF...

UHH, NEMATA, THERE MIGHT BE SOME CHANGE UNDER THOSE COUCH CUSHIONS, BUT I WOULDN'T COUNT ON ANY CORPSES



...YEAH, THAT GARMENT BOX--RIGHT THERE.



WH--
WHERE?!

HHMM...
LOOKS
LIKE...





...I DO
SENSE SOME
RESIDUAL
PRESENCE
HERE...

WEIRD...

...BUT IT'S
NOT ENOUGH
FOR ME TO
SPEAK
WITH IT.



ALL
RIGHT...
ALL
RIGHT...

OHON,
KARATEBOY
SHOW 'EM
THAT DOLL IS
ANATOMICALLY
CORRECT!



WAAAH!
STOP!!



LOW, I'LL
TAKE A
LOOK.

AAAA... I
SUPPOSE IT
COULD BE
SOMETHING
INSIDE THE
DOLL...



YOU LITTLE
PSYCHO!
TRYING TO CUT
HER OPEN
ARE YOU?!



WOW, YATA,
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!

I'M
SORRY...
THAT
WASN'T
ME.



DON'T!
SHE'LL
DIE--

WOW, WE'RE
JUST TRYING
TO FIND OUT
WHAT'S
INSIDE--



LOOK,
OH! OUR
KIDELLING!
SHE'S JUST
A PIECE OF
CLOTH!

MONSTER!
WHAT YOU
GONNA DO FOR
AN INCHES?
NEEDER
SHELTER ON
THE WIND!



STRANGE...IT
LOOKS LIKE IT WAS
FILLED WITH RICE
BEAN BAGS, SURE,
BUT...WHO PUTS
RICE INSIDE A
DOLL...?







SHE DIDN'T GET
THROWN AWAY.
DUMBAS! SHE GOT
LOST! LEFT BEHIND
BY ACCIDENT! BUT
THE APARTMENT
OWNER WANTED TO
REDECORATE SO ALL
THE OLD FURNITURE
WAS SLATED FOR
THE DUMP.



SO LET ME SEE
IF I UNDER-
STAND THIS--
YUSUKI USED
TO LIVE IN THIS
APARTMENT...

...AND "YUSUKI"
WAS THROWN
AWAY WHEN SHE
MOVED OUT...?



W-
WELL...

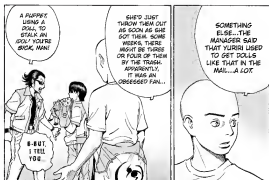
HOW DO
YOU KNOW
ALL THAT?



MAN?
SERIOUSLY?

IT'S NO GOOD.
EVEN THE BUILDING
MANAGER DOESN'T
KNOW WHERE SHE
MOVED TO...OR HE
WON'T SAY.















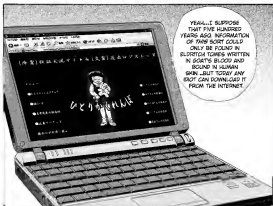


IT'S
CALLED
"SOLO
HIDE-AND-
SEEK."

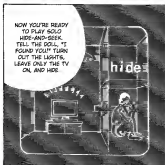
WHAT IS IT,
SASAKI?
I'M AT A
TEMPLE...



...IT'S
CALLED
WHAT...?



YEAH...I SUPPOSE
THAT FIVE HUNDRED
YEARS AGO INFORMATION
OF THIS SORT COULD
ONLY BE FOUND IN
GLOTTED TONGUES WRITTEN
IN SOATH'S BLOOD AND
BOUND IN HUMAN
SKIN...BUT TODAY ANY
BOAT CAN DOWNLOAD IT
FROM THE INTERNET.



ghost

OF COURSE, THAT
BIT ABOUT THE TV IS
PROBABLY MODERN.
ANYWAY, THAT'S
WHEN A SPIRIT OF
THE DEAD WILL COME
DOWN...AND POSSESS
YOUR DOLL.

夢見るシャンソン人形

DON'T BE AN
IDOT, A FAN
SENT HER
THAT DOLL,
REMEMBER?

...ARE PEOPLE
THAT BORED
THESE DAYS...?
AND WHAT ARE
YOU SAYING,
THAT YURIO
MADE THIS
DOLL...?



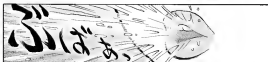
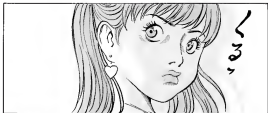


















MIKINO
FOLLOWED HER
OUT OF THE TV
STUDIO. WE
KNOW WHERE
THE STALKER
LIVES NOW.



YEAH...
OKAY, I
GOT IT.



WELL... I
SUPPOSE
SO.

...OHMYGOD,
I GUESS ALL
THAT'S LEFT IS
TO GET BACK
THE STOLEN
ROLLS. AND
WE'RE ALL
DONE.



WHAT DO
YOU MEAN
BY TWIT?



...WELL, IF
THIS IS JUST
A PRANK, IT
DOESN'T ADD
UP FOR ME.



Yoko APARTMENT
201. SHE WASN'T
LEFT THE ROOM,
SO SHE SHOULD
BE IN THERE.

SO IS
THIS THE
PLACE?



HEH...
WHAT'S THE
MEANING OF
THIS? IT'S
VERY
LATE...



HELLO...
KUROGASHI
DELIVERY
SERVICE.
ANYONE
HOME...?



WE'RE HERE TO
TAKE BACK THE
DOLLS YOU
STOLE FROM--
WHY IS IT SO
GOING IN
HERE...?



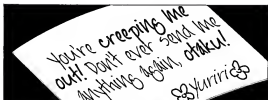
YOU'RE THE
ONE THAT'S
BEEN
HARASSING
YURU, AREN'T
YOU?



















THE TRUTH IS,
AN OTAKU
DESIRES...AND
AN IDOL DESIRES
TO BE DESIRED.



...EACH SOMEHOW
HAS TO BURN
WITHOUT BEING
CONSUMED...BUT
STILL, EACH HAS
TO BURN.



WELL, IT SEEMS
THAT YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO
NAME THE DOLLS
"HANSKO"...

*according to the
ancient wisdom
of chieft.*

SEE...
SEE...

YEAH,
I'VE BEEN
MOROSING
ABOUT THAT.
HANSKO'S A
GIRL'S NAME.
THE SPIRIT IN
THE DOLL WAS
A JUDGEY

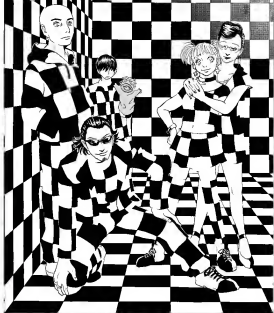


FAREWELL,
HANSKO!
FAREWELL!



ぶどう色の経験

grape-colored experience







THE HOMEOWNER
DIDN'T EVEN SOLVE HIS
PROBLEM. BECAUSE
NOW, THE GHOST
RIDES THAT HIGHWAY
ENDLESSLY...LOOKING
FOR THE HEAD HE
NEVER FINDS.

...BUT HIS
BIKE
KEEPS ON
RIDING ON.



THE GUY STRINGS
A PLANO WIRE
TIGHTLY ACROSS
THE ROAD. WHEN
THE BIKER
ZOOMS BY, HIS
HEAD COMES
OFF...



NO, THAT'S JUST AN
OLD STORY. BUT YOU
SEE...THERE'S A NEW
LEGEND RIDING THE
STREETS OF TOKYO...A
GHOST THAT CARKS ALL
WHO WITNESS IT...

HA HA HA! DID
I SCARE YOU?
WHO'D BELIEVE
A THING LIKE
THAT?



YEAH, IT'S KIND
OF LIKE THAT
OLD JOKE...
"PLEASE...NOT
ANOTHER
HELMET!"

OH-HA-
SHIT!



...THE
BIKER...
WHO'S JUST
A HEAD!!!











"LATE ONE NIGHT,
I SAW THE
RIDING HEAD
GOING FORWARD
SOTAGAYA ON
THE KANISAMA"—
COME ON!



THE
REALITY?

THIS
PARTICULAR
URBAN
LEGEND'S
BEEN GETTING
A LOT OF
CHATTER
ONLINE THE
LAST FEW
WEEKS...

WELL, IF
YOU DID,
YOU'RE NOT
THE ONLY
ONE.



THAT'S THE
SAME ROAD
I SAW IT
ON... DO YOU
BELIEVE ME
NOW?



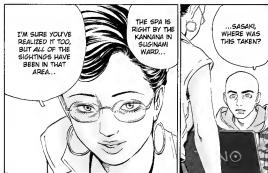
FERRY GEE, I WASN'T
CARELESS! I WAS
FINDING US A CLIENT!
WE'RE GOING TO EARN
A PROFIT ON THAT
WRECK! WHICH SASAKI
SAYS OTHERWISE IS
COMING OUT OF
MY POCKET!

YOU THINK
MAYBE ITS
BODY IS LYING
SOMEWHERE
NEARBY?



I WAS
THINKING ABOUT
SOMETHING... IF A
RIDING BODY WAS
LOOKING FOR ITS
HEAD, DOES THAT
MEAN A RIDING
HEAD...







JUST
STUFF ME
INTO A
LOCKER,
AND--

WELL, WE
DON'T
HAVE A
CAR...
OF THE
MOMENT.



CART WHO
NEEDS A CART
THESE BOOTS
ARE MADE FOR
HALLONS!
AND THAT'S
JUST WHAT
THEY'LL DO!



SIGHTINGS!
THAT'S IT! WE'VE
GOT TO GO THERE
AND LOOK AGAIN!
STAKE OUT THIS
SPA, THAT'S
WHAT I SAY!



BECAUSE
HALLONS...
IS FREE.



I'M GOING
TO LET THEM
GO, AND SO
YOU KNOW
WHY?

HONESTLY...
IT'S NOT
EVEN A
PAYING
JOB.

ハ
タ
ニ





IS THIS A
LAB...?



...YOU
REMEMBER
IT?

NO, IT IS THE
SAME BIKE.
I'M SURE OF
IT. THIS DECAL
HERE...

BUT WHY
WOULD A
GHOST
PAKE HIS
BIKE...





...I THOUGHT
YOU WERE
TRYING TO
STEAL MY
BIKE.



SO...WHAT
IS IT YOU'RE
RESEARCHING
HERE...?



SORRY,
SORRY,
ACTUALLY,
I'M
RELIEVED

WE'RE
SERIOUS,
DUDE.
DOCTOR, I
SAW IT
MYSELF.



SHEROW'S
CLEVER, BUT HE
FORGETS ONE
CRUCIAL THING! IF
YOU CAN DRAW A
HOT BABE LIKE
THAT, THE LAST
THING YOU WANT
TO DO IS MAKE
HER INVISIBLE!

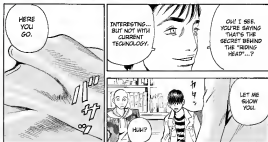
...I THINK
YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO
SAY, "LIKE IN
SHEROW
MAGAMINE'S
GHOST IN THE
SHELL."



YEAH? LIKE
IN YASUHIRO
NAKASEKI'S
OH! INVISIBLE
MAN, RIGHT??



YOU SEE THAT LAPTOP?
THE CAMERA'S PLACED
TO SHOW EXACTLY
WHAT'S BEHIND THE
SCREEN, AS IF THE
SCREEN WERE A
WINDOW... IN OTHER
WORDS, IF IT WEREN'T
THERE AT ALL. IT'S THE
PRINCIPLE BEHIND
OPTICAL CAMOUFLAGE...
I'M SURE YOU'VE SEEN
IT IN MANGA.







WE STILL
DON'T
HAVE ANY
LEADS.



YEAH, BUT
WE STILL
DON'T HAVE
A CLIENT.

IT'S GOOD
NEWS, RIGHT?
I MEAN, IF IT
WERE A LIVING
GUY WEARING
THAT SUIT, WE'D
HAVE NO CLIENT...



WHAT?
YOU
FOUND
HIS
BODY?!

I'M NOT JUST
A PEEPING
TOM... I'M A
DOWNSIZING
TOM!



YOU
DON'T...
BUT IF DO,
FOR YOU
FORGET...



REALLY STRONG? WE SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT BY NOW.





...



AND A HEAD.
HUH, IT'S NOT
EVEN THE GUY
WE WERE
LOOKING
FOR...

Y-YOU'RE
RIGHT?
IT'S A
BODY...



...IS THERE
SOMEPLACE
YOU WANT
TO GO...?



...WELL, WE CALL
OURSELVES THE
KUROGASHI CORPSE
DELIVERY SERVICE.
TELL US WHERE,
AND WE'LL TAKE
YOU ANYPLACE
YOU NEED.



Y...ES...I...
M...U...S...T...
R...E...T...U...R...N...







...THAT
PROBABLY
WAS THE
WISEST
CHOICE.

SO THEN YOU
DECIDED TO
BRING THE
BODY HERE
INSTEAD OF
THE WOMEN'S
SPA...



E SUEFU
UNIVERSITY
OPTICAL
INSTITUTE...

日本工科大学光学研究所



HMM?



SO THEN THIS
OSHI IS THE
SOURCE OF THE
RECENT URBAN
LEGEND...?

BUT...
AHHHHH

CHECK THIS
OUT! THIS IS
AMAZING!
HA HA HA
HA HA!

PLEEF
STOP
THAB...

砂に消えた涙

...I'll
ASK HIM.

I SEE.
THOUGHT THE
TECHNOLOGY
FOR THIS SUIT
DIDN'T EXIST
YET.

YES. HOW
DOES IT
WORK?

Waaaa!









See, it's true. He had the bike key in his pocket.



アハハ...



Oh... No... It's my... bike... car.

He's probably wondering when I'm going to get back and how he's going to explain.



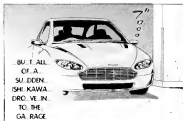
Explain what...?

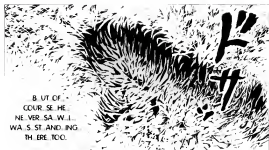


I parked my bike in my space.



Well... I was coming back from seeing that night.









...THE DATA
MUST BE
THERE.



COME TO
THINK OF IT,
HE SAID HE
WAS DOING
SOME WORK
AT HOME AS
WELL...



NO, LOOK.
HE'S STILL
IN THE
ROOM.



DOES THAT
MEAN
WE'RE TOO
LATE...?

HEY LOOK, THE
LIGHTS ARE
ON. I THINK
SASAKI'S
HUNCH WAS
RIGHT.



THEN LET'S
MAKE OUR
DELIVERY.







IS THIS A
JOKE...?
THERE'S
NOTHING
THERE.



TRY...
OVER
THERE.



OSHII?!

TH IS IS
MI NE



...I GOT
SOME-
THING
FOR
YOU...



IS HI
KAWA...

YOU'RE STILL
ALIVE? YOU
SHALL
WORSE
THAN EVER,
MAN...

ゴウ...





OUR CLIENT.

WHO WAS THAT
...?



...YES, YES, I CAN
PERFECT IT, OH-
BETWEEN YOUR
DATA AND MY
RESEARCH, I'VE
GOT EVERYTHING
IN HAND...





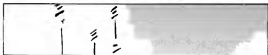








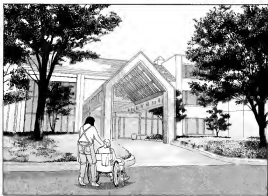
It's delivery: tons that disappear into the void—the end













N-NO...

SIR, HE
PASSED
AWAY JUST
A SHORT
WHILE AGO.
IT WAS
CARDIAC
FAILURE...



PROFESSOR
SHINOWA...
HOW IS HE?



...WHAT
WILL THE
PARTY DO
NOW...?

THE
VOICE...AND
VOICE...



ONLY ONE
WORD,
SIR.

WHAT
WAS
IT?



...YOU WERE
WITH HIM AT
THE END,
RIGHT? DID
HE SAY
ANYTHING?







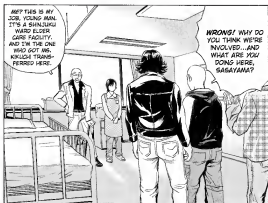














UM...BUT
IT'S TRUE
ABOUT MR.
MINOWA'S
BODY...

...DO YOU
KNOW
ANYTHING
ABOUT IT?



GORD
MINOWA...
PROFESSOR
MINOWA? I'VE
HEARD OF HIM.
DID HE TEACH...



N-NO...I
DIDN'T
MEAN IT
LIKE
THAT...

SUSPECTING
US, TOO? HIS
KINUCHI, I
THOUGHT YOU
WERE SURE??



HE WASN'T
REALLY A
PROFESSOR
OF ANYTHING...HE
WAS JUST
CALLED THAT
OUT OF
RESPECT.



RUMORS ABOUT MINOWA
GO BACK TO THE YOSHIDA
ADMINISTRATION. THEY
TALK ABOUT HOW POWER
BROKERS IN THE
DET--TOP POLITICAL
OPERATIVES--WOULD PAY
THE MOST DUMBLE CALLS
ON "THE ALL-HEARING
EAR", IN HOPES OF
FINDING OUT WHAT
HE'D HEARD.

HE WAS A KIND
OF ANALYST,
AN OPPOSITION
RESEARCHER...
OLD MAN MINOWA
HAD THE AMAZING
ABILITY TO FERRRET
OUT SCANDALS AND
SECRETS BEFORE
ANYONE ELSE.



THAT WAS PART
OF HIS MYSTIQUE.
HE NEVER TOOK
MONEY FOR HIS
INFORMATION. HE
WASN'T FOR SALE,
SO HE COULDN'T
BE BOUGHT. HE'D
EITHER TELL YOU
OR HE WOULDN'T.



IF HE WAS
SUCH AN
IMPORTANT
SOURCE OF
INTELLIGENCE,
WASN'T HE
RIGHT?



HOLD ON A
SECOND... WHAT
WOULD SUCH A
BLOW—PARDON
ME FOR SAYING
THIS—BE DOING
IN A PUBLIC
CARE FACILITY?



WELL,
YOU SEE,
THERE'S
ANOTHER
PROBLEM.

AM I MISSING
THE PROBLEM
HERE? IF HE'S
DEAD AND
DISAPPEARED,
HE'S OFF YOUR
BUDGET, TOO.



for
for
for



MS.
KNUTCH
...?

UH? OH,
YES...

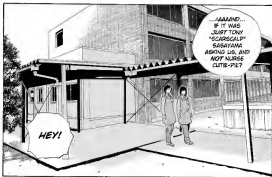












6th delivery

ある事情

a certain situation







THE SLAUGHTER BECAME SO GREAT THAT, INSTEAD OF BRINGING BACK THE TRADITIONAL SEVERED HEADS OF THE VANQUISHED, THE SAMURAI STARTED TAKING ONLY THE PICKLED EARS OF KOREANS BACK INSTEAD—TO SAVE SPACE. THEY WERE BURIED IN MOUNDS, OF WHICH THE *ANZENSAKI* NEAR THE *HIDEYOSHI* SHRINE IN KYOTO IS MOST NOTABLE.

IN THE LATE 18TH CENTURY, THE *SHUNGO TOKUDOMI* *HIDEYOSHI*, DREAMING OF ESTABLISHING AN ASIAN EMPIRE, BEGAN BY TRYING TO INVADE CHINA THROUGH KOREA.



WAIT. IF THEY DATE FROM 1946, MAYBE HE TOOK THEM FROM AMERICAN SOLDIERS...?

I DON'T THINK SO...

DO YOU THINK THESE EARS WERE STOLEN FROM THERE?



LIKE I SAID, EVEN IF THEY WERE FROM THE WAR 400 YEARS AGO, THERE ARE OTHER *ANZENSAKI* AROUND JAPAN. WE WOULD HAVE NO IDEA WHICH ONE THEY REALLY CAME FROM.

SO WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO? SEND THESE BACK TO KYOTO AND WE'RE DONE, RIGHT?

UNNNNNNO. FROM THE SHAPE OF THE EAR, THEY WERE ASIAN. AND...I THINK THEY WERE *CHINESE*.





...SHE?



IT'S GOOD
THAT I'VE
SEEN
PROFESSOR
MINOHA AT
WORK.



--YOU'RE
THE ONES
WHO TOOK
HIS BODY.

YOU
WERE
WITH--

OTHERWISE
I MIGHT NOT
BELIEVE IN
STRANGE
POWERS...SUCH
AS SPEAKING
TO THE DEAD.



PERHAPS
"ASK" ISN'T
THE WORD I
WANT HERE.

お
お
お



YOU
M-MEAN...
I CAN'T DO
THAT--MY
POWERS
ARE...



YES, HE
BELONGS TO
THE PARTY. I'VE
RETURNED TO
ASK THAT YOU
SPEAK TO HIM
SOME MORE.







THAT'S RIGHT, HE ENTERED THE ROOM AT THAT ANGLE, AND DRAGGED HER OUT WALKING BACKWARDS-- SO HE DID KNOW.



WHAT? THIS IS NO GOOD...WE CAN'T EVEN SEE HIS FACE!



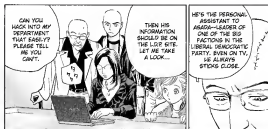
THE ANGLE'S JUST RIGHT. CAUGHT A REFLECTION.

LOOK! THE PICTURE FRAME ON THE BED STAND...



...I CAN SEE IT!



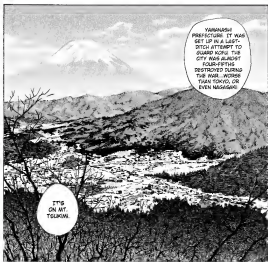


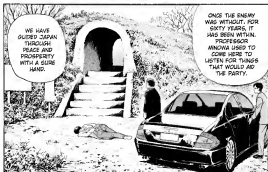


















AT LEAST
CLEAN UP
THIS MESS
YOU'VE
MADE.



YOU YOUNG FOOL.
YOU THOUGHT YOU
KNEW SOMETHING
OF THESE POWERS?
SHE'S WEAK... WEAK
LIKE ALL HER
GENERATION. IT
WOULD SEEM.

I... I'M
S-SORRY
SIR...



...YES...



...IF I HAD
HELD THIS
OVER YOUR
FACE A
LITTLE
LONGER...



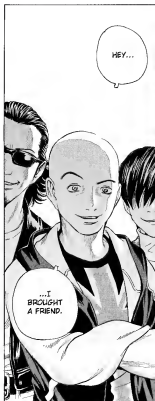
YOU SEE THAT
CHAIRMAN AGEDA
IS ALWAYS AS
GENTLE AS HE
CAN AFFORD TO
BE. HE DIDN'T LIKE
ME THROWING
YOU ABOUT, MS.
KIKUCHI.





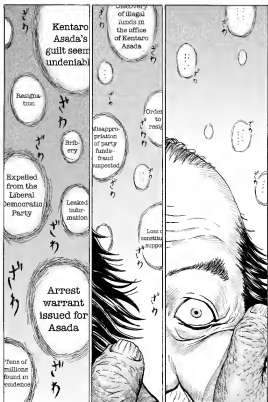


















ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT,
KIMUCHI?

...WELL,
I GUESS
WE'RE IN THE
CLEAR, FOR
ONE REASON
OR ANOTHER.

...TH-
THANK
YOU...



BUT WHY
DID THEY
LEAVE...?



...WHOSE
WERE
THEY...?



WHA T.
THE
EARS
TO ID
HIM

HE
WANTS
TO
FACE







TH ERE
WA S
O NLY
DU TY





I KNOW A
TALKER. ANY
LAID TO REST
IN SUCH A
FASHION WILL
BE REBORN FREE
OF THE POWERS



THEN I
PUT THE
GUN TO MY
OWN
HEAD



THEY WE'RE ALL
NEARLY PICKLED
JUST LIKE THE
EARS. THE
SAMURAI HAD
BROUGHT
BACK LONG
AGO



I HAD
HEARD
THE VOICES
TOO

BECAUSE
I HAD
LIED TO
THE
BOYS





F OR A
LONG TIME
IT WAS
ABOUT
REBUILDING



AND
SOME TIMES
THE
POLICIANS



SOME TIMES
KNOWING
THE
PEOPLE'S
HEARTS



AND WE
WE'RE TOOLS
ONLY FOR
THE POWER
FUL TO KEEP
THEIR POWER



BUT WE
WE'RE NOT
SEERS BUT
HEARERS



AS A MAN
GOES TO
THEY STARTED TO
TALK ABOUT
MY MORE SOME
THAT WAS
A SEER





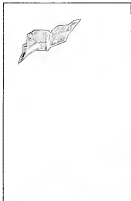






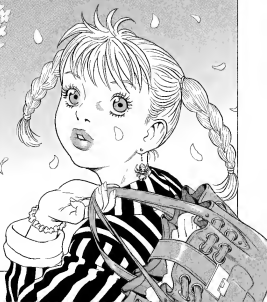


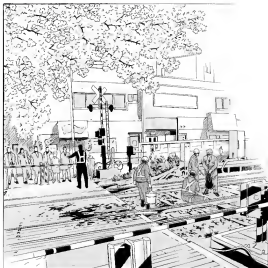




This delivery: what lies after the dream—the end

私のかなしみ





JUST AS THE
TRAIN WAS
ABOUT TO
PASS, A WOMAN
JUMPED IN
FRONT OF IT.

OH, MAN!
WAS IT AN
ACCIDENT?

NAH,
SUICIDE.









...OH, REALLY?
IS THE CHIRITO-
TECHIN FROM
THE PLEYADES
REALLY THAT
TASTY?



TASTY? I
CAN'T GET
ENOUGH
OF IT!



WELL IT
TASTES JUST
LIKE PUDDING
THAT'S
GONE BAD.



SO THEN...
WHAT DOES
IT TASTE
LIKE?











AND ASK
YATA TO
COME BACK
TOO...

**GOODBYE,
MUMUME-TANI!
COME BACK
SOON!**



ER...
HEH-
HEH...

WHAT? WE
DON'T
WANT HIM
AGAIN...



BUT I'M KINDA
SURPRISED YOU'RE
STILL DOING
VOLUNTEER WORK,
SEEMS HOW LITTLE
WE MAKE ON OUR
REGULAR JOB...

IT'S OKAY.
I HAD A
GOOD
DAY,
ACTUALLY.

UM...
THANKS
FOR
HELPING
OUT.



BESIDES,
THEY
REMAIND
ME OF...

YEAH, WELL, AS
LONG AS I'M STILL
AROUND CAMPUS,
I KEEP SEEING
FLYERS. I FEEL
LIKE I CAN'T TURN
THEM DOWN...

I never
thought I'd
put on other
costume
again...



MY HOST BODY
WENT MADA
FEMALE
KIN-PAIR WITH
WHOM HE
SHARED 50% OF
HIS GENETIC
SEQUENCE



...



WELL...
LOH...

YEAH...?

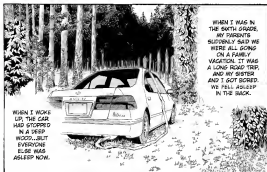


SHE...
WELL...



DID SHE
PASS
AWAY?

SHUTTER
...?

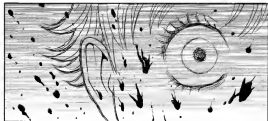


WHEN I WOKE
UP, THE CAR
HAD STOPPED
IN A DEEP
WOOD...BUT
EVERYONE
ELSE WAS
ASLEEP NOW.

WHEN I WAS IN
THE SIXTH GRADE,
MY PARENTS
SUDDENLY SAID WE
WERE ALL GOING
ON A FAMILY
VACATION. IT WAS
A LONG ROAD TRIP,
AND MY SISTER
AND I GOT BORED.
WE FELL ASLEEP
IN THE BACK.







YOU KNOW HOW
THEY CHARGE FAMILIES
HERE FOR TRAIN
SUICIDES. I guess I
WAS LUCKY THEY DIDN'T
BILL ME. BUT HE DID
NEED TO KEEP HIS
SCHEDULE...SO HE
BRAGGED THE HEAVIER
PART OF MONKEY OFF
TO THE SIDE...AND
GAVE THE LIGHTER
PART FOR ME
TO HOLD.



IT *WELL*
SEEMED
VERY
HEAVY.
THOUGH.





NO...I
DON'T
KNOW
WHY.



...DO YOU
KNOW WHY
YOU'RE DO
IT?

THE WEIRD THING
WAS, THE MORE I
STARED AT HER
FACE, THE HARDER
IT GOT TO SEE.
WHEN THE POLICE
TOOK IT AWAY, I
COULDN'T EVEN
REMEMBER WHAT
SHE LOOKED LIKE
ANYMORE.



I GUESS SO.
EVEN THOUGH
WE'VE KNOWN
EACH OTHER A
WHILE NOW...

AHA, I GUESS
THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME
WE'VE TALKED
ABOUT OUR
FAMILIES...

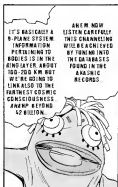
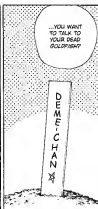


!!!



HEY,
BROTHER/
SISTER
WITH THE
ALIEN

ALRIGHT
YOU'RE...













GOOD-
BYE,
ALIEN!

THERE WAS
SOME
INTERFERENCE.
THE CONNEC-
TION WAS
BROKEN



HUH?
IT'S
GONE...



え
い
や



SHE
LOOKED
OKAY!
THANK
YOU!

BUT I
GOT TO
SEE
DEMI-
CHAN!





the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service

黒鷲死体宅配便

eliji otsuka 大塚英志 housui yamazaki 山崎峰水

designer HEIDI WHITCOMB

editor CARL GUSTAV HORN

editorial assistant ANNIE GULLION

publisher MIKE RICHARDSON

English-language version

produced by Dark Horse Comics

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DISJECTA MEMBRA

SOUND FX GLOSSARY AND NOTES ON KUROSAKI VOL. 9 BY TOSHIFUMI YOSHIDA

Introduction and additional comments by the editor

TO INCREASE YOUR ENJOYMENT of the distinctive Japanese visual style of this manga, we've included a guide to the sound effects (or "FX") used in this manga. It is suggested the reader not constantly consult this glossary as they read through, but regard it as supplemental information, in the manner of footnotes, or perhaps one of those nutritional supplements, the kind that's long and difficult to swallow. If you want to imagine it being read aloud by Osaka, after the manner of her lecture to Sakaki on hemorrhoids in episode five of *Azumanga Daich*, please go right ahead. In either Yuki Matsuoka or Kira Vincent-Davis's voice—I like them both.

Japanese, like English, did not independently invent its own writing system, but instead borrowed and modified the system used by the then-dominant cultural power in its part of the world. We still call the letters we use to write English today the "Roman" alphabet, for the simple reason that about 1,600 years ago, the earliest English speakers, living on the frontier of the Roman Empire, began to use the same letters the Romans used for their Latin language to write out English.

Around that very same time, on the other side of the planet, Japan, like England, was another example of an island civilization lying across the sea from a great empire—in this case, that of China. Likewise, the Japanese borrowed from the Chinese writing system, which then, as now, consisted of thousands of complex symbols—today in China officially referred to in the Roman alphabet as *hanzi*, but which the Japanese pronounce as *kanji*. For example, all the Japanese characters you see on the front cover of

The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service—the seven which make up the original title and the four each which make up the creators' names—are examples of *kanji*. Of course, all of them were *hanzi* first—although the Japanese did also invent some original *kanji* of their own, just as new *hanzi* have been created over the centuries as Chinese evolved.

(Note that whereas both "*kanji*" and "*hanzi*" are examples of foreign words written in Roman letters, "*kanji*" gives English speakers a fairly good idea of how the Japanese word is really pronounced—*khan-gee*—whereas "*hanzi*" does not—in Mandarin Chinese it sounds something like *n-tsuñ*. The reason is fairly simple: whereas the most commonly used method of writing Japanese in Roman letters, the Hepburn system, was developed by a native English speaker, the most commonly used method of writing Chinese in Roman letters, called the Pinyin system, was developed by native Mandarin speakers. In fact Pinyin was developed to help teach Mandarin pronunciation to speakers of other Chinese dialects; unlike Hepburn, it was not intended as a learning tool for English speakers per se, and hence has no particular obligation to "make sense" to English speakers or, indeed, to users of the many other languages spelled with the Roman alphabet.)

Whereas the various dialects of Chinese are written entirely in *hanzi*, it is impractical to render the Japanese language entirely in them. To compare once more, English is a notoriously difficult language in which to spell properly, and this is in part because it uses an alphabet designed for another language, Latin, whose sounds are different

(this is, of course, putting aside the fact the sounds of both languages experienced change over time). The challenges the Japanese faced in using the Chinese writing system for their own language were even greater, for whereas spoken English and Latin are at least from a common language family, spoken Japanese is unrelated to any of the various dialects of spoken Chinese. The complicated writing system the Japanese evolved represents an adjustment to these great differences.

When the Japanese borrowed *hanzi* to become *kanji*, what they were getting was a way to write out (remember, they already had ways to say) their vocabulary. Nouns, verbs, many adjectives, the names of places and people—that's what *kanji* are used for, the fundamental data of the written language. The practical use and processing of that "data"—its grammar and pronunciation—is another matter entirely. Because spoken Japanese neither sounds nor functions like Chinese, the first work-around tried was a system called *manyogana*, where individual *kanji* were picked to represent certain syllables in Japanese. A similar method is still used in Chinese today to spell out foreign names, companies and individuals often try to choose *hanzi* for this purpose that have an auspicious, or at least not insulting, meaning. As you will also observe in *Kurosagi* and elsewhere, the meaning behind the characters that make up a personal name are an important literary element of Japanese as well.

The commentary in *Katsuya Terada's The Monkey King* (also available from Dark Horse, and also translated by Toshifumi Yoshida) notes the importance that not only Chinese, but also Indian culture had on Japan at this time in history—particularly, through Buddhism. Just as in Western history at this time, religious communities in Asia were associated with learning, as priests and monks were more likely to be literate than other groups in society. It is believed

the Northeast Indian *Siddham* script studied by Kukai (died 835 AD), founder of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism, inspired him to create the solution for writing Japanese still used today. Kukai is credited with the idea of taking the *manyogana* and making shorthand versions of them—which are now known simply as *kana*. The improvement in efficiency was dramatic: a *kanji* previously used to represent a sound, that might have taken a dozen strokes to draw, was now replaced by a *kana* that took three or four.

Unlike the original *kanji* they were based on, the new *kana* had only a sound meaning. And unlike the thousands of *kanji*, there are only 46 *kana*, which can be used to spell out any word in the Japanese language, including the many ordinarily written with *kanji* (Japanese keyboards work on this principle). The same set of 46 *kana* is written two different ways depending on its intended use: cursive style, *hiragana*, and block style, *katakana*. Naturally, sound FX in manga are almost always written out using *kana*.

Kana works somewhat differently than the Roman alphabet. For example, while there are separate *kana* for each of the five vowels (the Japanese order is not A-E-I-O-U as in English, but A-I-U-E-O), there are, except for *n*, no separate *kana* for consonants (the middle *n* in the word *nihya* illustrates this exception). Instead, *kana* work by grouping together consonants with vowels: for example, there are five *kana* for sounds starting with *k*, depending on which vowel follows it—in Japanese vowel order, they go KA, KI, KU, KE, KO. The next set of *kana* begins with *s* sounds, so SA, SHI, SU, SE, SO, and so on. You will observe this kind of consonant-vowel pattern in the FX listings for *Kurosagi* Vol. 9 below.

Katakana are generally used for manga sound FX, but on occasion *hiragana* are used instead. This is commonly done when the sound is one associated with a human body, but can be a subtler aesthetic choice by the artist as well. In *Kurosagi*

Vol. 9 you can see an example on 37.2, with the BUBAAA of Yuriri spitting, which in hiragana style is written ふばあづ. Note its more cursive appearance compared to the other FX. If it had been written in katakana style, it would look like バアツ.

To see how to use this glossary, take an example from page 6: "6.1 FX: ZAAAAA—sound of pouring rain." 6.1 means the FX is the one on page 6, in panel 1. ZAAAAA is the sound these kana—ザアアアア—literally stand for. After the dash comes an explanation of what the sound represents (in some cases, like this, it will be less obvious than others). Note that in cases where there are two or more different sounds in a single panel, an extra number is used to differentiate them from right to left, or, in cases where right and left are less clear, in clockwise order.

The use of kana in these FX also illustrates another aspect of written Japanese—its flexible reading order. For example, the way you're reading the pages and panels of this book in general—going from right to left, and from top to bottom—is similar to the order in which Japanese is also written in most forms of print: books, magazines, and newspapers. However, some of the FX in *Kurosagi* (and manga in general) read left to right. This kind of flexibility is also to be found on Japanese web pages, which usually also read left to right. In other words, Japanese doesn't simply read "the other way" from English; the Japanese themselves are used to reading it in several different directions.

As might be expected, some FX "sound" short, and others "sound" long. Manga represent this in different ways. One of many instances of "short sounds" in *Kurosagi* Vol. 9 is 7.5's PASA—バサツ. Note the small ツ mark it has at the end, which stands for the sound "tsu." In hiragana, such as 37.2, it looks like つ. The half-size "tsu" seen at the end of FX like this means the sound is the kind which stops or

cuts off suddenly, that's why 7.5 and 37.2 are written as PASA and BUBAAA, and not PASATSU and BUBAAATSU—you don't pronounce the "tsu" when used this way. Note the small "tsu" has another occasional use inside, rather than at the end, of a particular FX, where it indicates a doubling of the consonant sound that follows it.

There are three different ways you may see "long sounds"—where a vowel sound is extended—written out as FX. One is with an ellipsis, as in 91.5's GOSO. Another is with an extended line, as in 114.1's CHII CHII KII KII. Still another is by simply repeating a vowel several times, as in 59.1's OOOO. You will note that the CHII CHII KII KII in 114.1 each have a "tsu" at their end, suggesting an elongated sound that's suddenly cut off, the methods may be combined within a single FX. As a visual element in manga, FX are an art rather than a science, and are used in a less rigorous fashion than kana are in standard written Japanese.

The explanation of what the sound represents may sometimes be surprising, but every culture "hears" sounds differently. Note that manga FX do not even necessarily represent literal sounds. Such "mimetic" words, which represent an imagined sound, or even a state of mind, are called *gitaigo* in Japanese. Like the onomatopoeic *giseigo* (the words used to represent literal sounds—i.e., most FX in this glossary are classed as *giseigo*), they are also used in colloquial speech and writing. A Japanese, for example, might say that something bounced by saying PURIN, or talk about eating by saying MUGU MUGU. It's something like describing chatter in English by saying "yadda yadda yadda" instead.

One important last note: all these spelled-out kana vowels should be pronounced as they are in Japanese: A as ah, I as ee, U as ooh, E as eh, and O as oh.

2.1 The translator notes that all the chapter titles in Volume 9 are

songs by Asami Kobayashi. She was active as a singer, actor, and model starting in the 1970s, until she retired in 1991. The title to the second chapter gets a little complicated. In the original Japanese, it is "Yume miru shanson ringyoo" (that's a long "ohhh" sound on the end, of course, rather than "oooh"), which literally translates to "the chanson doll that dreams" (*chanson* meaning song in French). This was a Japanese-language cover sung by France Gall of her own French-language original song, "Poupée de cire, poupée de son" ("doll of wax, doll of brain"—*bran* being a filling used in France for dolls; compare to the rice used in this story) that won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1965. French pop was, well, popular enough in Japan then (you'll recall that in *Masculin, Féminin*, Chantal Goya mentions she's climbing the Japanese charts) to warrant the cover; Gall also recorded versions in German and Italian. Various artists have covered it in other languages. The song itself was written for Gall by *l'ecrip le plus extraordinaire* Serge Gainsbourg (and as a manga fan, the editor is no longer sure how he means that). The original French version has also been covered by The Arcade Fire and Belle and Sebastian. But "A Lonely Singing Doll" is used as the title here as this was the name of the English version, covered (also in 1965) by the UK singer Twinkle (whose own single "Golden Lights" you may possibly know from The Smiths' cover of it on *Louder Than Bombs*. And this is only the *first* note in "Disjecta Membra."

- 5 I love the fact that this is a *doll* version of Kereellis, who is, of course, in everyday life, a puppet.
- 6.1 FX: ZAAAAAA—sound of pouring rain
- 6.2 FX/balloon: WIIIIIN—sound of elevator rising
- 6.3 FX: KA KA—sound of heels
- 6.4 FX/balloon: PI—tuning of mobile phone
- 7.1 FX: GACHA—sound of a door opening
- 7.4 FX/balloon: PACHI—light switch being flipped
- 7.5 FX/balloon: PASA—sound of hair falling down out of hat
- 8.1 FX/balloon: KII—door creaking open
- 8.4 FX: PUKA PUKA—sound of doll floating/bobbing
- 8.5 FX: PUKA PUKA—sound of doll floating/bobbing. Note the retractable cover on the bathtub, intended to keep heat in and suds out (one washes outside the tub in Japan before soaking a clean body—in America, we just throw a little more chlorine in the hot tub).
- 9.1 FX: DOSHA—wet thud as trash bag hits ground
- 9.3 She actually said *wota no fan*; that she hates the "wota" kind of fan. It's been an affectionate the last few years in Japan, especially on the image forum 2chan, to spell *otaku*—normally written オタク, o-ta-ku—as ヲタク, or wo-ta-ku. This was possibly inspired—or perhaps reflective of—Hideaki Anno's 2006 decision to spell the new Evangelion movies エヴァンゲリオン, which is romanized as *Wēvangelīwon*. This risks making Anno sound like Kim Jong-Il in *Team America: World Police*, but

you will be relieved to hear it's still pronounced "Evangelion," just as *wota* and *wotaku* are still pronounced "ota" and "otaku." The effect is a little like the way one might choose in English to use the old-fashioned spelling *phantasy* for *fantasy* (as used, for example, in the game *Phantasy Star*). The *wo* ("woh") sound has not actually existed in Japanese for centuries (English, too, used to sound quite different centuries ago; anyone who's ever heard *The Canterbury Tales* will be reminded of the Swedish Chef from *The Muppet Show*), and by the early twentieth century the kana for *we* had simply become a redundant form of a ("eh"), so it was officially discarded in the orthographic reforms following WWII. The *wo* ("woh") sound does still exist in dialect, although generally speaking it has the same value as *o* ("oh"), and in fact as early as 1996 *Evangelion* was spelling its famous bishie's name Kaworu, even though, yeah, yeah, it's just pronounced "Kah-oh-roo." Bear it in mind when you read *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The Shinji Ikari Raising Project*, also from Dark Horse, and one of those love comedies Numata is so apprehensive towards. Even a non-otaku (are there any left?) may be familiar with this kind of usage from Clint Eastwood's much-acclaimed recent film *Letters from Iwo Jima*, the *Iwo* is pronounced "ee-oh," not "ee-woh," but seeing as how it was WWII that made the place famous, it is the old romanization of *Iwo Jima* rather than the postwar *Jo Jima* that has remained in the popular mind.

9.5 FX/balloon: GACHA—placing door chain

- 9.6 FX/balloon: PACHIN**—locking deadbolt
- 10.1 FX: PINPOON**—doorbell sound
- 10.2 FX: PINPOON PINPOON**—doorbell sounds
- 10.3.1 FX/balloon: GACHA**—jiggling-door-handle sound
- 10.3.2 FX/balloon: GACHA**—jiggling-door-handle sound
- 10.3.3 FX/balloon: GACHA**—jiggling-door-handle sound
- 10.4 FX/balloon: SUCHA**—picking up phone
- 11.3 FX: BECHA PATA BECHA**—sound of something moving with a wet squishing sound
- 11.4 FX/balloon: GATA**—sound of grate rattling
- 11.5 FX: ZU**—sound of something sliding along
- 11.6 FX: ZU ZU**—sound of something sliding along
- 14.5 FX: SUCHA**—taking out pendulum
- 15.3 FX: HYUN HYUN**—pendulum swinging back and forth
- 16.3 FX/balloon: HYUN HYUN**—pendulum swinging
- 17.2 FX/balloon: SU**—touching doll
- 17.5 FX: SHAKIN**—pair of scissors opening up
- 17.6 FX: BA**—grabbing doll
- 18.1.1 FX/black: SA**—Makino reaching for doll
- 18.1.2 FX/white: GURIN**—Yata's body twisting out of the way
- 18.3.1 FX/top: GU**—Makino tugging
- 18.3.2 FX/bottom: GUGUGU**—puppet tugging
- 18.4 FX: BABII**—doll tearing
- 18.5 FX/balloon: ZAAAA**—sound of rice pouring out

20.4 Actually she said *rajikaru*, *rajikaru*! By spelling *raji* in katakana and *karu* in hiragana, the original dialogue makes the English word *radical* into a trendy-sounding Japanese verb, taking advantage of the fact *aru* is a verb ending (one of several in Japanese). Dark Horse Director of Asian Licensing Michael Gombos points out that something comparable is done in Japanese by turning the English jealousy into *jeraru*, which can then, like *rajikaru*, be conjugated as if it were a Japanese verb for “to be jealous.”

24.2 This is an unusual volume of *Kurosagi*, in that we run into something we rarely see in the story (in fact, we haven’t seen it in the main story since vol. 1)—actual, you know, Buddhist priests. You may wonder why he gets a square title in English like *Reverend*, instead of something more cool you might associate with a Buddhist priest, like, say, *Brother*. But a term like *Reverend* is closer to what the sociology majors call *unmarked*, meaning it’s seen as a default or normal term, because Buddhism is a default or normal religion in Japan. Indeed, it’s very common for Buddhist priests in America to call themselves *Reverend*; like most community religious leaders, they want to be seen as, well, a normal member of the community. Buddhism still has a somewhat exotic image in American culture (that is, outside the small percentage of Americans who are raised in it)—the words *Buddhist priest* call to mind a monk leaping into the air, or the Dalai Lama. *Reverend* calls to mind the guy who chews you out for having brought a copy of *Trinity Blood*

to the youth retreat (I heard this anecdote at Kumoricon). But, as you may have noticed by now, being a Buddhist in Japan is like being a Baptist in the South. Except for minor differences in doctrine, I’d like to see the *Kurosagi* gang run into the wacky American versions of themselves, who went to Howard Payne University.

26.3 **FX: PARA PARA**—sound of rice grains falling out

27.2 The doll-blessing temple portrayed here is—you guessed it—based on a real one. Setsuko Kamiya wrote in the October 15, 2008, issue of the *Japan Times* (eight months before the story appeared in *Comic Charge* magazine) about the annual prayer and burning ceremony, held September 25, at the Kiyomizu Kannon-do Temple in Tokyo’s Ueno Park. The ceremony apparently evolved out of the practice of parents bringing their children to the temple for a blessing and leaving behind a doll at the temple to represent the child (or so that any bad influences would fall upon the doll, not the child). As time went on, this intersected with the Japanese love for dolls and figurines (an affection shared, of course, with many other cultures), people who didn’t feel right about simply discarding such dolls started leaving them there alongside the dolls representing children.

27.5 **FX/balloon: JAN JYAKA JAN**—nng tone

29.1 **FX: TATA**—sound of keys being tapped

31.5 Japan (like much of the world) uses a 24-hour clock, a system in the U.S. associated with the military. However, whereas “24.00” means

- midnight in Japan, Michael Gambon notes it's not uncommon for Japanese schedules to give 1 AM as "25:00," 2 AM as "26:00," etc., when events run into the early morning hours. There's an interesting philosophy here—that time should be given as a person experiences it; that if they're still up at 1 AM, the day is going into "overtime" for them.
- 32.2 To paraphrase Chris Rock, idols love to *not know* shit. But I bet you wouldn't catch Shokotan acting the fool like this.
- 32.3 FX/balloon: VWOOOM
VWOOOM—sound of cell phone vibrating
- 33.3 FX: KA KO—sound of footsteps
- 33.4 FX: PURAN—sound of doll dangling
- 33.6 FX: KO—footstep
- 34.1.1 FX/balloons: CHIKI CHIKI—blade clicking out
- 34.1.2 FX/balloon: CHIKIN—blade clicking into place
- 34.3 FX/balloons: ZAKU ZAKU—stabbing sound
- 34.4 FX/balloon: CHAPUN—sound of doll getting submerged
- 34.6 FX/balloon: FU—sound of lights turning off
- 34.7 FX/balloon: BATAN—door being closed
- 35.3 FX/balloon: KACHA—door being opened
- 35.4 FX/balloon: PATAN—door being closed
- 35.6.1 FX/balloon: PACHI—turning on lights
- 35.6.2 FX: PA PAA—fluorescent lights turning on
- 36.1 FX/balloon: PICHOO—sound of dripping faucet
- 36.2 FX/balloon: CHAPU—sound of an arm coming out of the water
- 36.3 FX/balloon: BISHA—soggy splashing sound
- 36.4 FX: NUCHARI BICHA—wet sloshing/splashing sound
- 37.1 FX: KURU—sound of Yuri turning her head
- 37.2 FX: BUBAAA—spraying-water sound
- 37.3 FX: BISHA PICHA—sound of spray hitting doll
- 37.5 FX/balloon: DOBICHA—sound of doll hitting floor with a wet thud
- 38.1 FX: DOKA DOKA DOKA—stomping sounds
- 38.2 FX/balloon: BAN—door being banged open
- 38.5 FX: GWOOOO—sound of the car
- 40.2 FX/balloon: PI—hanging-up sound
- 41.2 FX: KON KON—knock knock
- 41.4 FX: GA—grabbing door
- 42.3 FX: GA—grabbing doorknob
- 42.4 FX/balloon: MEKI—sound of Kuro's hand getting smashed
- 43.1 FX: GA GA—fingers grabbing edge of door
- 43.3 FX: GAKYAN—door being ripped off hinge
- 44.2 FX: KWOOOO—sound of the air conditioner
- 46.6 FX: SU—placing hand on body
- 48.2 FX/balloon: WIIN—sound of sliding doors opening
- 48.3 FX: KO KA—sound of heels on floor
- 48.4 FX: PI—hanging up cell phone
- 49.1 FX/balloon: GACHA—opening door

- 49.4 FX/balloon: PACHI—turning on light
- 49.5 FX/balloon: PASA—hair falling down out of cap
- 50-51.1 FX: GURIN—head turning
- 50-51.2 FX: MUKU—getting-up sound
- 52.2.1 FX/balloon: DOSA—sound of doll falling over in the pyre
- 52.2.2 FX/small: PACHI—crackling flame
- 52.2.3 FX/small: PACHI—crackling flame
- 52.4 Hanako literally means *flower child*, although it don't have none o' them hippie connotations to it; in fact, it's a very traditional name—too traditional, perhaps—these days just plain Hana would be considered more cool.
- 53.4 Eiji Otsuka's feelings about otaku are, shall we say, nuanced. On one hand, he depicted as lulzworthy Gomiket being nerve-gassed in *MPO-Psycho* Vol. 4. On the other, he manages to suggest a little empathy with a weak and sad specimen as seen in this story. Or rather, is it not so much empathy for the departed, as a certain distaste for the attitude of Yuriri, who, after all, like many idols, prospers by making a cult of personality out of herself (as evidenced by all the merchandise in 44.1), but then gets outraged when she attracts cultists? Karatsu's attitude seems to be that anyone who wants to make their living as an idol has no business insulting their fans for sending tributes. The headlines seen here seem to suggest everyone became happier when Yuriri dropped her Lolita act in favor of a bad-girl image instead, trumpeting her "*Transformation*" and "*Sexy and Revealing Body!*" on a new tour for her fans, with mutual affection.
- 55 Is it just the editor's doujin-corrupt brain, or are Makino and Sasaki making eyes at each other? 'Cause otherwise, this could be, like, an early-eighties album cover. Actually, that would make it even more like an early-eighties album cover. The editor thinks the best part of Berlin's "Sex (I'm a . . .)" is when Terri Nunn says "I'm a *bif*" and John Crawford does that chuckle.
- 58.3 FX: BAWOOOO—motorcycle sound
- 58.4.1 FX: OOO—wind/motorcycle sound
- 58.4.2 FX/balloon: KURURI—sound of head turning
- 59.1 FX: OOOO—wind/motorcycle sound
- 60.1 FX: BAWOOON—motorcycle sound
- 60.4 Note the mechanical traffic director, designed for high-speed roads where it would be too dangerous for a human signaler to do the job (at least, when Numata's about). As mentioned way back in vol. 1's "Dissecta Membra," note for 94.2–3, Japan's construction sector is far larger and more active than Japan's actual construction needs. The reason for this, as you might guess, is to give as many people as many jobs as possible. Besides the jobs that involve actually building something or tearing it down, every construction site also creates employment for an outer ring of people (often student or part-time workers—even Keiichi Morisato did it once in *Oh My Goddess!*) whose job it is to direct foot or vehicular traffic *around* the site. About ten years ago, the editor was rounding a building under construction in Tokyo, where a bracket-shaped path of cones led

the pedestrian off the sidewalk, a few feet out onto the street away from the scaffolding, and then back onto the sidewalk again. There was a person to signal you as you entered the path, another as you made the first turn, another as you made the second turn, and then finally one to wave you out. All with those little lighted wands. On an American street construction site there might be a worker checking their text messages, but that's about it (at least one builder I saw on Burnside had an Operation: Mindcrime sticker on his hard hat—cool, but I was disappointed when I read Gore Vidal's Lincoln and found out that Portland's main drag was named for such a poor general).

- 60.5.1 **FX: BAKYAN**—sign breaking
- 60.5.2 **FX/balloon: GOKIN**—sound of car hitting signpost
- 60.6 **FX/balloon: SHUU**—sound of steam escaping
- 62.2 These are, as you might guess, all forum postings about the Riding Head, although the name given it in Japanese is *kubi dake rakdai*, literally "Head-Only Rider." *Kubidake* can also mean "complete devotion," appropriate enough, as we shall see. *Kamens* is the understandably shortened form of the highway officially known as the *Tokyo-to kaikaku dōro kansen sangai rōkan jūdai nana-go-san*, or "Line 7 of the major bypass for the Tokyo city building plan". . . or something like that.
- 62.5 **FX: BAN**—hitting-table sound
- 63.3 Note that there are supposedly already seventeen pages of archived postings about the Peeping Head available at

www.kubidakenozokima.jp/html (surprisingly, a nonexistent website). In panel 5, they're checking out the video on "YouTofu," a play on the definitely existing Japanese version of YouTube.

- 63.5 **FX/balloon: TSUUU KAKO**—sound of finger sliding down track pad then clicking
- 66.3 **FX: PAN PAN**—slapping feet
- 66.4 **FX: BATAAN**—slamming door. In the back are the Japanese versions of the Yurin poster from 2nd Delivery, not to mention the "Go Ricefish" banner from vol. 4, 1st Delivery. I like how they collect this stuff. It's kind of a pauper's version of the Batcave.
- 70.6 "!!!!!! don't believe it! Thermoptic camouflage!" Note how at that moment in the movie (or manga) they can still see the Major as she disappears, but nobody thinks to actually shoot her. To paraphrase Dr. Evil, "No, no, I'm just going to stand here and watch as she gradually becomes completely invisible."
- 71.4 **FX: KATA**—standing-up sound
- 71.5 **FX: BASA**—spreading out fabric
- 71.6 **FX: GATA**—setting up projector
- 72.3 This "invisibility suit" really exists as depicted (and, just as depicted, is more like appearing transparent than invisible) and was first reported in world media in February of 2003, based on a demo version developed by Susumu Tachi and his team at Tokyo University. Dr. Tachi, who looks like a proper manga scientist, has his homepage at www.star.lu-tokyo.ac.jp/~tachi/.
- 73.4 **FX/balloon: CHARAN**—dangling sound

- 74.4.1 FX: ZA—footstep
- 74.4.2 FX: ZA—footstep
- 74.4.3 FX: ZA—footstep
- 74.5 FX: GA—tripping sound
- 75.2 FX: SU—reaching down
- 76.3 FX: DON—putting hand down on body
- 77.4 FX/balloon: KACHA—clatter of the zipper
- 77.5 FX: BABIIII—zipper being pulled
- 79.3 When I first saw the *Riding/Peeping Head* close-up on 65.1, I did think, *Hey . . . this guy looks like Mamoru Oshii!* But then, there's a lot of cats who look like Mamoru Oshii—in Japan, anyway. I didn't expect it to actually be a reference to him (you have to look closely at his ID, but the guy's name is in fact Mamoru Oshii—the only difference from the film director being that different kanji are used to spell his first name. The kanji in *Esuefu* make it sound like the name of a (fictitious) urban prefecture, but it's a pun on SF, i.e., science fiction. I really want to see Oshii's latest, *The Sky Crawlers*. I'm a little concerned because, unlike most Oshii films, the protagonists are teenagers, and there's already more than enough anime where the protagonists are teenagers. It's not about putting the youth of today down. It's about a thirty-eight-year-old otaku, faithful follower of the scene since age eleven, requesting some equity. Shit, man, since they rebooted the movie series, James Bond is now supposed to be the same age as Daniel Craig—forty. If he can still do all that stuff with the help of CG, surely an anime character can do it with the help of Production I.G.
- 79.5 FX: MUNYU—cheeks being pulled
- 81.1 The morpho butterfly, native to Latin America, has ultrafine, iridescent scales whose structure has been studied for various applications, including thin-film optics, and, increasingly, photonic-crystal fibers. As for what that really means, I majored in history, so I'm inclined to echo Numata's response.
- 82.1 FX: GASHI—grasping-hand sound
- 82.2 FX/balloon: JUI—closing-zipper sound
- 82.3 FX/balloon: JI—zipper closing
- 82.5.1 FX/balloon: GON GATAN—hitting obstacles
- 82.5.2 FX/balloon: GASHAN—knocking cart over
- 83.2 FX: NUBO—head appearing out of nowhere
- 84.2 FX/balloon: CHARA—dangling-key sound
- 85.3 FX/balloon: JIII—closing-zipper sound
- 85.4 FX: PIII PIII—reverse warning beeps
- 85.6.1 FX/top: DON—impact sound
- 85.6.2 FX/middle: GO—hitting wall on the way down
- 85.6.3 FX/bottom: GOKI—sound of a bone breaking
- 86.1 FX: DOSA—sound of body hitting ground
- 87.3 FX: BAN—hitting table
- 89.1.1 FX/balloon: GATAN—pulling out drawer
- 89.1.2 FX/balloon: GARA GARA—dumping out contents
- 89.4 This is vol. 1 of the original *Oh! Invisible Man* (in Japanese, *Oh! Jouneranger*), which, as you might guess from its appearance, was a 1980s manga series that ran in Kodansha's *Monthly Shonen*

Magazine (today, home of the Pumpkin Scissors manga) for eleven volumes. Yasuhiro Nakanishi has revived it in recent years, switching publishers to Shueisha, where the sequel *Oh! Invisibile Man 21* (21, after this oh-so-wonderful-thus-far century) ran in the biweekly *Super Jump* magazine for eight volumes (home of the immortal Golden Boy). When you have "Oh" beginning an exclamatory phrase, Japanese seem to like placing the exclamation point immediately after the exclamation itself, instead of at the end of the phrase. Thus you will often see in manga a foreigner being shown to say in English "Oh! My God," rather than "Oh My God!" Now, to the native English reader, that makes it look like the stress is being put on the "Oh!" which sounds a little unnatural, but the issue likely doesn't occur to the person reading in Japanese. Gombos sees in this the Japanese simply applying their own usage of exclamations at the beginning of a phrase to English (the original title of the manga *Oh My Goddess!* is *Aa megami-sama*, where the *Aa* is the exclamation). As usual, it's not like it was intended for native English readers to fret over. It's kind of like how you see people writing ninjas, applying English usage to Japanese (where there's no special plural spellings to words; whether it's one attacking you or a hundred, it's just *ninja*).

- 90.1 FX/balloon: GACHA—door opening
- 90.4.1 FX: DOSA—putting body down
- 90.4.2 FX/balloon: JI—starting to pull zipper
- 90.5 FX: JIPAAAAA—pulling zipper down

- 90.6 FX: IIII—zipper coming to a stop
- 91.3 FX: SU—disc floating out of hand
- 91.5 FX: GOSO—rummaging in pocket
- 92.1 FX: BASHUUUU—spraying sound
- 92.2 Of course no one, even in Japan, would be crazy enough to make a consumer product like this. Ha, ha, just kidding—it's real, of course. You can buy it at www.strap-ya-world.com/products/10932.html. "Please don't spray directly to skin. It may cause burn wounds."
- 92.2.1 That was uncalled for. I'm an American; now excuse me while I go buy something safe and sensible, like a Desert Eagle Mark XIX chambered for .50 Action Express.
- 92.3.1 FX: PISHI PISHI PISHI—sound of the suit's surface hardening
- 92.3.2 FX/balloon: PORO—dropping disc
- 93.1 FX/balloon: GA—grabbing disc
- 93.2 FX: BA—putting disc into coat
- 93.3 FX: BAAAAAAA—spraying face
- 93.4 FX: DATATATATA—running down stairs
- 93.5 FX: BAN—slamming door
- 94.1 FX: GYUGYUWOON—car speeding off
- 94.2 FX/balloon: PARIN—glass breaking
- 94.3.1 FX/balloon: DON—sound of something landing on car
- 94.3.2 FX: WOOOOO—car speeding away
- 94.6 FX: BAN—hand hitting windshield
- 95.2.1 FX/balloon: PAKI PAKI—suit starting to flake away
- 95.2.2 FX/balloon: PAKI—suit falling apart
- 95.3.1 FX/balloon: PAKI—suit falling apart

95.3.2 FX/balloon: PAKI—suit falling apart

99.1 FX/balloon: KAN KORON—sound of sign clattering on the ground

99.2 FX/balloon: PATAN—broken sign falling to a stop

102 Oh, yeah, and have you ever wondered what's up with pages like this—and page 54, and similar pages in other volumes? 99.9% of the time, a manga comes out in Japan one chapter at a time in an anthology magazine, and only later gets collected to graphic novel (or not; if it remains uncollected, it's sometimes because no one liked it the first time, and sometimes because the material was unfinished or insufficient in length for a graphic novel—Kenji Tsuruta, Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, and Hiroaki Samura have all done great stuff for magazines that remains uncollected). *Kurosagi* runs in Kadokawa's *Comic Charge* biweekly magazine (or rather, it did, until the magazine's recent cancellation, but don't panic—it was *Kurosagi*'s third home, and Kadokawa has promised to find it a fourth). But, being an anthology manga magazine, any given chapter of *Kurosagi* naturally has to be laid out in a particular issue in a way that takes into account all the other manga sharing that issue. Notice how "4th delivery" ends, and "5th delivery" begins, both on the left-side page. That was how they had to fit into their respective issues, but it means you have to add a "blank" page like 102 when you collect them to a graphic novel. Like most manga magazines (and unlike most major-publisher U.S. comic books),

only a very small percentage of *Comic Charge* consisted of ads—in a typical four-hundred-page issue there might be eight or nine interior pages (that is, not counting the outside or inside covers) of ads, and maybe five or six pages devoted to editorial matters (table of contents, reader giveaways, etc.)—meaning that it's over 95% actual manga content. You may be curious as to what the original *Kurosagi*-reader demographic was expected to buy. A survey of nine random issues of *Comic Charge* shows that for six of them, the inside-back-cover ad was taken out by a chain of circumcision clinics (recall *Even a Monkey Can Draw Manga*'s report on the great phimosis debate). In the ad, a handsome male model tries to free his head from a black turtle-neck pulled up to his nose, a struggle despite the help of two attractive women who are already hanging off each shoulder. Three issues out of the nine had back-cover ads for the Merrell Jungle Moc (and a fourth had it on the inside front cover). Other ads to appear included the Nintendo DS test prep for the TOEIC (Test Of English for International Communication) twice, also twice, the DVD release of the film *Waking My Life* (original Japanese title: *Zo-no senaka*, "The Back of the Elephant"—English-subtitled trailer at www.shochiku-films.com/movie/zou.html), and ads for Suntory Bitter & Sharp beer and Black Boss coffee in a can.

103.1 FX: MEEN MEEN MEEN JEEWA JEEWA—sound of cicadas

- 103.2 **FX: MEEN MEEN MEEN**—sound of cicadas
- 108.3 **FX: FUSA**—cloth being placed over face
- 108.4 **FX/balloon: DON DON**—banging on door
- 109.1 **FX: GACHA**—door opening
- 111.2 **FX/balloon: KII KII**—sound of squeaky wheels on a cart
- 112.1 **FX: PAKU PAKU**—puppet mouth flapping
- 112.2 **FX: CHII CHII CHII**—high-pitched, mosquito-like sounds
- 112.3 **FX/balloon: KOSO**—rustling under desk
- 112.4 **FX: KACHA KACHA KACHA KACHA**—pressing keys
- 112.5.1 **FX: CHII CHII**—high-pitched sounds
- 112.5.2 **FX/balloon: KACHA**—pressing keys
- 112.5.3 **FX/balloon: TATATA**—tapping on keys
- 112.6 **FX: CHII CHII CHII**—high-pitched sounds
- 113.4 Makino's jacket, bearing a cheerful youth with an IV, says "Kizumono Kids," meaning "Injured Kids." It's kind of Juniko Mizuno-ish, don't you think?
- 114.1 **FX: CHII CHII KII KII**—sounds
- 115.3 **FX/balloon: CHARARAN CHARARA JA JA JAAN**—ring tone
- 116.1 **FX: CHIRA**—glancing back at Sasaki
- 116.2 **FX: NIKO**—smile
- 116.4 **FX/balloon: PI**—hanging up cell phone
- 120.5 **FX/balloon: GASA**—taking out a newspaper-wrapped object
- 122.2 **FX: GASA**—opening up paper
- 123.4 **FX: DAN**—slamming hand down
- 124.3 **FX/balloon: KACHA**—door opening
- 124.6 **FX/balloon: BATAN**—closing door
- 125.1 **FX: KA KA**—sound of cane on floor
- 126.2 **FX/balloon: WIIN**—sound of motorized car mirror tracking Kikuchi
- 126.4 **FX: NNNH**—sound of power window being lowered
- 130.1 Folklorist Kurio Yanagita, of course, is an influence Eiji Otsuka has paid tribute to since the first volume, including making him a Sherlock Holmes-like detective in vol. 6.
- 131.3 **FX: SU**—placing hand on body
- 132.1 **FX: KACHA**—footstep
- 132.6 **FX: POTATA POTA**—sound of falling droplets
- 133.1 **FX: GA**—grabbing sound
- 133.3 **FX/balloon: BURAN**—hand going limp
- 133.4 **FX/balloon: CHARARA CHARARAN JAJAJAAN**—ring tone
- 134.1 **FX: SUCHA**—placing phone on ear
- 136.2 **FX: TATATA TATA**—tapping at keys
- 137.3 The screen relates that Keisuke Matsuzawa was born and lives in the Setagaya Ward of Tokyo (remember that Sasayama works for one of Tokyo's other wards, Shinjuku), went to Gakkan High, and attended Waseda University School of Law, with a stint at Tokyo Empire Bank after graduation. Waseda is often considered to be the second- or third-best university in Japan (battling for the rank with Keio)—and Michael Gombos went there, in case you doubt you're in good hands with Dark Horse Manga.

- 138.2 FX: KA KA—sound of heels
- 139.4.1 FX/balloon: KACHI KACHI—jar rattling
- 139.4.2 FX/balloon: KACHI—jar rattling
- 139.4.3 FX/balloon: KACHI—jar rattling
- 139.5.1 FX/balloon: KACHI—jar rattling
- 139.5.2 FX/balloon: KACHI KACHI—jar rattling
- 139.5.3 FX/balloon: KACHI—jar rattling
- 141.3 Radar was invented in the years just before WWII, but the war (understandably) greatly accelerated its development. Martin Favorite suggests that the critical issue in Japan's case seems to be that senior officers didn't grasp its importance until late in the war, and hence Japanese radar in 1945 remained as much as three years behind America's, (which was also using its advanced radar offensively, to help guide its bombs). A dramatic illustration of this difference is in the fact that on December 7, 1941, the Japanese naval air task force approaching Pearl Harbor was actually picked up by U.S. Army radar on Oahu (but dismissed as a false alarm), yet the attackers themselves had no radar! You can see a picture of a surviving choongo at www.outdoorgeocities.jp/koletsu0213/dec02602.jpg.
- 142.2.1 FX/balloon: JARI JARI—sound of tires on gravel
- 142.2.2 FX/balloon: JARI—sound of tires on gravel
- 142.3 FX/balloon: Kii—door creaking open
- 143.1 FX: DOZA—Kikuchi hitting gravel
- 144.1 FX: KOFAA—sound of the truck being opened
- 145.5 FX: PAAAN—slap
- 146.4 FX: SUKU—standing-up sound
- 146.5 FX/balloon: POTATA—sound of droplets
- 147.1 FX: DADADA—running sound
- 147.4 FX/balloon: TATATA—running sound
- 148.2 FX: KO KA—footsteps
- 149.5.1 FX/balloon: KACHA—jar rattling
- 149.5.2 FX/balloon: KACHA—jar rattling
- 150.1.1 FX/balloon: KACHA—jar rattling
- 150.1.2 FX/balloon: KACHA—jar rattling
- 150.1.3 FX/balloon: KACHA—jar rattling
- 150.1.4 FX/balloon: KACHA—jar rattling
- 152.1 FX: BA—jumping in the way
- 152.2 FX: PETASHI PETARI—bare footsteps
- 152.4.1 FX/balloon: GASHAAN—breaking glass
- 152.4.2 FX/balloon: PAN—popping-jar sound
- 152.4.3 FX/balloon: GASHO—muffled shattering sound
- 152.6 FX: PICHO—dripping sound
- 153.4.1 FX: BICHARI—wet squishing sound
- 153.4.2 FX: KUCHU—wet pressing sound
- 154.1 FX: ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA—distant murmuring sound
- 154.2 FX: ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA—murmuring sound
- 154.3 FX: ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA—loud murmuring sound
- 155.1 FX: ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA ZAWA—loud murmuring sound
- 155.2 FX: WAAAAAAAAAAA—scream
- 157.1 FX/balloon: BURORORO—car driving away
- 157.2 FX/balloon: BERI—ripping duct tape off
- 158.2.1 FX/balloon: SA—taking out pendulum

- 158.2.2 FX/balloon:** CHARAN—sound of dangling chain
- 158.3 FX:** HYUN HYUN—sound of pendulum swinging
- 160.3 FX/balloons:** KYAN KIN KIN—sound of bouncing shell casing
- 164.1** This is the Shigeru Yoshida referred to in 119.5. Prime minister of Japan during most of the postwar U.S. occupation (1945–52). Yoshida laid the groundwork for the basic rules of Japanese policy ever since: concentrate on domestic economic development and leave defense to the United States. In *Modern Times*, conservative historian Paul Johnson compares Yoshida's role to that of Adenauer in Germany or de Gasperi in Italy; that is, a politician who can take credit for leading a former Axis power out of devastation and on the path to peace and prosperity. This seems fair enough, but Johnson also characterizes Yoshida as "a former diplomat and thus from the background closest to Anglo-Saxon traditions of democracy and the rule of law," whereas John Dower in *Embracing Defeat* views Yoshida as believing that "the Japanese people were not capable of genuine self-government"—the two views are not necessarily contradictory. The editor, by the way, thinks that because the actual America is full of both liberal and conservative people—and that's not likely to change anytime soon—it's a good idea to try to understand America by reading both conservative and liberal interpretations of its history. So, if you've read Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, try Paul Johnson's *A History of the American People* (the differences in phrasing between the two titles are themselves interesting), and vice versa. Note that the present (at least, as of March 2009—his ratings are dropping fast) prime minister of Japan, the famously manga-loving Taro Aso, is Shigeru Yoshida's maternal grandson.
- 166.2 FX:** DOSA—corpse falling down
- 167.2 FX/balloon:** VWOON VWOON—sound of cell phone vibrating
- 167.3 FX/balloon:** CHA—placing phone on ear
- 168.2.1 FX/balloon:** GASA—moving through foliage
- 168.2.2 FX/balloon:** GASA—moving through foliage
- 168.2.3 FX/balloon:** GASA—moving through foliage
- 168.3 FX/balloon:** GASA—moving through foliage
- 169.3 FX/balloon:** ZA ZA—digging sound
- 170.4 FX/balloon:** PATAN—closing cell phone
- 172.3 FX/balloon:** PASA—sound of newspaper landing on ground
- 175.5 FX/balloon:** KOKU—nod
- 176.6 FX:** ZURU—wet, dragging sound
- 177.4 FX/balloon:** CHARARA CHAN CHARARA—ring tone
- 178.1.1 FX/balloon:** CHIRARA JARARAN CHARA ZUN—ring tone
- 178.1.2 FX/balloon:** PI—answering phone
- 178.4 FX/balloon:** PI—hanging up
- 179.4 FX:** PAKU PAKU—sound of puppet's mouth flapping
- 180.1 FX:** SHIIN—sound of silence
- 181.4 FX:** GARA—opening sliding door
- 183.1 FX:** DADADA—kids running to Mumume-tan. A good reminder of the fact that many of the shows

otaku lavish their, er, affection upon were technically directed at children; famous magical-girl series of the '90s such as *Sailor Moon* and *Cardcaptor Sakura* ran in *Nakayoshi* magazine, a shojo monthly (since 1954!) intended for readers in junior-high and elementary school. But with *Nakayoshi*'s circulation numbers having declined from 1.8 million in 1995 to 400,000 today, there is, of necessity, often more acceptance of the otaku element in marketing, with the perception that a contemporary magical-girl show such as *Futari wa Pretty Cure* (also a *Nakayoshi* title) is kept going in large part through otaku support (vide Kohia Hirano's plot to insert himself into the show in the back of *Heihsing* Vol. 7). The editor feels the idea that it's only otaku who sexualize this stuff is a little overstated; for example, it was quite possible to see a *Sailor Moon* routine at Japanese strip clubs in the mid-'90s, and they're not really an otaku thing. It's hard (uh-huh-huh-huh), you know, for me to properly express how much I like *Heihsing*. It's not so much conveying the intensity, as the proper tone. I'm not especially into vampires, Nazis, or the Alucard x Integra equation, so it's not like that. It's more like—in Howard Hibbett's *The Floating World in Japanese Fiction*, there's a woodcut reproduced from Ejima Kiseki's 1715 story "The Rake," where the rake, witnessing a dance at an inn, exclaims, "it's so delightful / I can hardly bear it!" I'm that guy. By the way, in the same book, Hibbett shows a

scene from Saikaku's *The Man Who Spent His Life in Love* of a man peeping on a bathing woman, suggesting not much has changed in Japanese pop culture these last three hundred years.

- 183.2 "Kei-chan," is it? If you'll recall, her full name is Keiko Makino.
- 183.6 FX/balloon: NINI—smirk
- 187.5 FX: KAN KAN KAN—warning bells
- 188.1 FX: KAN KAN KAN KAN—warning bells
- 188.2 FX: PWAAAN—train horn
- 190.5 FX/balloon: NIHI—smirk
- 191.5 The "Akashic Records" (from the Sanskrit *akasha*, "aether") refer to a supposed complete account of all human knowledge, past, present, and future, supposedly existing on another plane (also supposed to exist). The concept apparently arose in the nineteenth-century Theosophist movement and is very useful as an all-purpose plot device in fantasy and SF, sort of like onchalicum. Then again, it's possible that Kereellis is just fucking with us.
- 193.1 FX/balloons: HO HO HO—jogging man exhaling
- 193.5 FX: ZAAA—sound of wind through the trees
- 197.3 FX: PYON PYON—jumping up and down in happiness
- 197.4 FX/balloon: CHU—kiss
- 198.3 FX/balloon: CHU—kiss
- 198.5 FX/balloon: KIII—sound of brakes
- 198.6 FX: BIKU—twitch of fear
- 199.1 FX: GASA GASA—tramping through bushes
- 199.3 FX/balloons: BAN BURORORO—door closing and car driving away

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